

*A publication of Schatzi's Design Gallery & Day Spa, LLC*

*Schatzi's is Raleigh's 1<sup>st</sup> full-service natural hair salon and your gateway to natural hair care beauty. Au Naturel newsletter, an essential part of our information sharing services, is a wondrous labor of love that is a joy to create and a gift to you our valued clients and to the public at large.*

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## SALON SUMMER DISCOUNTS

**May Mother's Day Special** – 10% off for mother's; 25% off for grandmothers. Specials will be applied to all services over \$50.

**May and June Graduation Special** – 20% off the cost of all hair care services over \$50. Please show your student ID at the time of your hair care service.

**Summer Swimming Special (June-August)** – Box braids for all girls up to 17 years of age for only \$140. That represents a savings of up to \$40. Specials for children under 10 years of age will be determined on an individualized basis.

## PERSONAL, SALON AND COMMUNITY UPDATES

With April showers on the decline, we are now gearing up for the more intense heat and humidity of summer. I personally have been so busy that I haven't observed nature in my usual way. Days are peeling away one behind the other, and I arise giving thanks that I have breath and strength to serve for another day. And speaking of giving thanks for another day, I have an unusual testimony. Regular

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readers know my life is pretty quirky. The past weeks have been no exception: During a recent spate of *busy-ness*, I was in the salon until 1am after having begun my workday at 8am the previous morning. I had a late client and then was blow-drying my own hair which takes oo-gobs of time!! Then I drove home. It was a big fundraising day for the non-profit that I work with, so I slept until 7am, was back at the salon shortly thereafter working through 4pm and then rushed to Durham to work for the remainder of the evening raising funds for healthcare in Haiti. The night was a great success! The photo to the left is of me standing with one of the evening's band members—the same guy who taught my sons how to play Reggae on the guitar (acoustic and bass)! I hadn't seen him in about 8-10 years!! (Note: If you need a good band OR a good guitar instructor, send me an email.) But I digress... I knew I was pushing my limits on lack of sleep. Even with my intermittent insomnia, I do better than this! But, I don't push that

hard often, so I figured it would be alright. The problem however was that I found myself drifting off to sleep at the steering wheel while driving in the dead of night (10pm) between Durham and Raleigh!! My husband didn't come with me that night because with my salon schedule and my work schedule at the gala, it just didn't make logistical sense. Well, no one pulls off the road to take a snooze when driving from Durham to Raleigh. Am I right? So, I felt like I had to *suck it up* and "just do it." Well as I listened to music to try and stay awake, I felt an internal shudder like someone shaking me gently. I started in surprise and straightened up only to realize that my eyelids had been closed while pushing 70+ mph!! This *nudge* happened on at least five separate occasions during that drive home! Another time I recall something like that happening to me was when my husband and I started dating and some impish *angel(?)* kept pushing me into his arms when I was walking next to him. I kept falling into him like I was walking in zig-zag. I would apologize and straighten up only to fall into him again. I looked to my right rather annoyed, knowing that I would see nothing but air. But, I was pushed!! He smiled inwardly and kept his body open waiting for me to fall into him again. I knew he thought I was doing it on purpose; but, I was definitely being shoved into him from my right. I hadn't been drinking anything other than water but I couldn't walk straight to save my life. I have NEVER had that happen to me since. Well needless to say, when I pulled into my driveway that night, I thanked God. Truly!! *Babies and fools people, angels take care of babies and fools*. I fell into the "fool" category that night. I give thanks for grace and mercy and divine miracles, however they come. And note to self: I'll sleep at the hotel next door to my Durham office if that should happen again in the future. But in truth, sometimes we just don't know how tired we are until we've woken up. That night, I was trying to wake up on the other side of glory. "I can only imagine God saying: *Gabriel, wake that chic up! Somebody needs to have a talk with her. She's trippin'!!*" God obviously aint done with me yet. Thank you Lord! ☺

Within the salon, mothers are seriously sharing their thoughts and opinions about Baltimore and all of the other madness going on within the scope of our **Americanized ethnic cleansing** reality. One sister came into the salon because she took the day off to decompress because of anger about the whole Baltimore affair. With all of the energy circulating, I wrote a most provocative essay on the subject

that was protracted, raw, deeply personal and biting. My sister was horrified that I actually would consider publishing it here. It is titled "Think again: An essay that really is too real to publish." I shared it with some of my non-Black compatriots. I said simply, 'I want to share with you how I feel about life in America right now. Because I love and trust you, I'm willing to share with you what many Black people are *really* feeling but wouldn't freely share. But in the spirit of "keepin' it real," I am.' Truly, I have come to the place where I don't care about a lot of things that I used to care about. [I'm changing](#). So, that's how it is. I call hypocrisy what it is, and I don't care whose listening.

So, why not post the article? Well, my sister said it incites violence. My response was: "I disagree. It targets individual wrong-doers, not the masses." I only express my own truth; because in truth, "Sorry, I thought it was my taser" just don't cut it. I am a product of my environment and our collective reality. And one thing I do know, White America would never tolerate their sons being gun-downed by Black police officers, or Black men of any kind, at the rate that it is happening to ours while they sit idly by praying for the madness to end. They'd be burning down a lot more than what we have seen on television while holding the Good Book and referencing [Galatians 3:13](#) the entire time. Remember the [Rosewood Massacre](#), the [Tulsa Incident](#) and the [Wilmington Insurrection](#). Are we truly so captured as this? If we have learned conflagration, our former slave master was our teacher. I don't encourage anyone to take the path of vengeance. Likewise, I acknowledge that I was born and will surely die a sinner. And death is inevitable... I am no saint. And God loves me anyway. So, I'm not posting the article that I wrote because these pages are intended to be "all about love." But in a way, there is no deeper love than a mother's love for her child. And it is the spirit of that love that I wrote that article. To readers, I say only this: Take care of your families. Talk to your sons. I, in turn, have beseeched my own to take great care if for no other reason than to keep Momma out of prison. Pray hard. And when the time to pray while mobilizing comes, be ready for that too...however it may come. Amen.

Within the wider community, ladies are gearing up for the NUSOL Natural Hair and Beauty Expo on Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>. I personally will be in Haiti the first week of June; so, I won't be attending this year. But, I know it's going to be divine. The ad flyer is on the cover page. **Check out [their website](#) and [their Facebook page](#) for regular updates!!**

For this issue of Au Naturel, you'll find an interview with a naturalista who has been 5 years natural and has beautiful flowing locks as evidence of a job well-done. She provides her own personal tips on straightening without heat damage. The remainder of the newsletter is food for spiritual contemplation. Father Richard Rohr is the author of my morning devotional. He's a radical to say the least; but so was Jesus. And so, he is a man after my own heart. I love his spirit and the depth of his character. His words resonate with my spirit as they often mirror my own lived experience. So, I share his devotional in the spirit of love. This devotional speaks specifically to how religion has transformed over time from the early days of the Church. I found it rather fascinating and insightful, as I have often wondered how a message of [pure love](#) can be transformed in 2,000 years to one that was used to enslave Black people and which actively fosters division among the peoples of the world. I listen to some Christian stations on television, and it appears that Christianity has become synonymous with capitalism. I first was introduced to the origins of this idea in college while studying sociology—[this book in particular](#). I believe this shift in perception is noteworthy, as a good Protestant work ethic is synonymous with paying homage to God through service to humanity. That is good! But, the exploitation of human labor primarily for the sake of accumulation is frankly unloving. So, I read Fr. Richard Rohr because I personally am quite open to any knowledge and insight that goes as close to the Source as possible... Take what makes sense to you and leave the rest. In the

meantime...Embrace the beauty of you.

## TREMENDOUS TRESSES: STRAIGHTENING TIPS FROM KIRBY

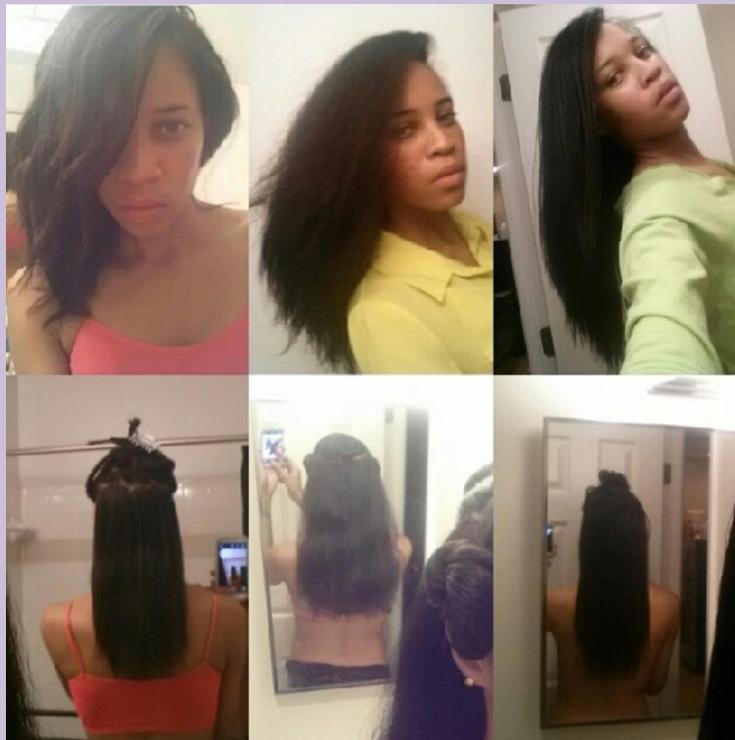
When I was a girl growing up, my hair was (*snap your fingers*) long. Sometimes, I wore short afros because my Mom didn't know what else to do with it. But after going natural, I was amazed to learn that my hair was naturally long. Who knew? Many sisters taking the natural journey are learning this truth: Black women can grow some hair!!! Though many are way too impatient to discover the truth for themselves. Well, a client recently shared her niece's blog with me and there, I came across a sister who is discovering this natural hair truth for herself and sharing the good news. The following is an interview with her, and a few pictures taken along her natural hair care journey. I present to you an interview with Kirby.



**Schatzi:** Hi Kirby. Thanks for agreeing to this impromptu interview. Please tell our readers a little bit about who you are, when you went natural and why.

**Kirby:** Hello, my name is Kirby Edwards. I am a 29 year old aspiring fashion designer based out of DC. I am currently working on the launch of my line *Kirby J* which can be seen on my Instagram page Kirby\_\_j\_\_. (Note: The Instagram page has two underscores before and after the "j".)

I have currently been natural a little shy of 5 years. Going natural for me was out of the blue. It was never something that crossed my mind, I never discussed it with anyone. I just never thought about it. It just happened. I was watching Youtube one day, and I came across a video called *black hair inspiration*. This video showcased black women with natural hair all the way down to the middle of their backs, some even to their butts. I was amazed...like WOW! Is it possible that I can have such luscious locks as they displayed? This one Youtube channel pushed me into the natural hair community on Youtube and I was hooked from that day on. I learned everything there was to know about how to take care of my natural hair, and I was ready. So, I big chopped. Going natural gave me a sense of freedom and a sense of individuality. It made me ME.



**Schatzi:** I love your collage of photos to showcase your journey. It's a really great way to track progress. So, what made you decide to start a blog?



**Kirby:** I just wanted to share tips here and there to give others help they needed with being natural. Other natural hair women inspired me and now I want to inspire others. For me, my blog is another creative outlet. It may not be the best blog out there; but, it's mine.

**Schatzi:** I noticed some recent comments you posted about hair straightening which I thought were cool. Tell us your philosophy about straightening and why you have it.

**Kirby:** I don't straighten my hair often, 2-3 times a year tops. I do enjoy my hair straight because it's like enjoying the fruits of your labor. You work so hard to obtain this long hair and never get to enjoy it[s many flavors]. I think if you prep your hair before straightening, you can't go wrong with heat damage which is a natural's fear. The number one rule I think to straighten your hair is moisturizing and deep conditioning your hair before the straightening process. I actually deep condition overnight.

**Schatzi:** That's a great tip that the hair must surely love!! I personally haven't straightened my hair since 1999. It was for a job interview. While having it done, I had this strong feeling that my hair was mad at me, so I haven't done it since. Maybe I'll consider your words and straighten my own tresses for a change of pace...or maybe not. 😊 Blow drying has become my straightening service but "to each his own." We'll see...

So, what is the process that you use to straighten your hair? For example in the salon, we always use a heat protectant for the hair. Do you do the same? And what heat setting do you use?

**Kirby:** First, I detangle my hair with conditioner and an olive oil mixture. Then I separate my hair in about 12 twists to prepare for washing; this is the only time I probably use shampoo, as many know shampoo strips the hair of your natural oils. After I shampoo, I apply my deep conditioner which is probably a cheap conditioner because we all know naturals go through boat loads of conditioner. I will put a shower cap on and go to sleep. The next morning, I will wash out the conditioner and leave about 15 percent in my hair. After conditioning and rinsing, I try to soak around 90 percent of the water out of my hair to prepare for blow drying. The way you blow dry will determine the results of your flat iron. I use a concentrated nozzle on my blow dryer and a paddle brush. I blow dry on high heat to get a good straight blow out. Before blow drying, I apply a protectant that contains silicone which will prevent moisture from getting into my hair and from ruining my flat iron. I take 1 inch sections that aren't too thick which will allow me



to make one pass with the flat iron through my hair. I do not put the heat level of the flat iron over 350°--this is good for my hair. Excessive heat or multiple passes with the flat iron will encourage heat damage.

**Schatzi:** Have you ever had any problems with reversion?

**Kirby:** I never had problems with reversion. The trick is to put deep conditioner on dry hair and the leave the conditioner in overnight. The next day, my hair is back curly.

**Schatzi:** That's interesting. I think conditioning the hair before and after straightening, blow drying on a high heat setting-with the drying step doing most of the work, followed by minimal heat application is a very good prescription. Naturally, everyone's hair is different so people will have to find the right prescription that works for them, but this guidance is a great start! Thanks for sharing these tips.

Now If there were some advice that you would give to women considering a natural journey, what would it be?

**Kirby:** My advice will be to take your time and be patient. There are rules to follow with natural hair, but you must also learn your own hair and listen to what it likes and it doesn't like. One more thing: there's no such thing as "good hair." Love your hair and the good in it.

**Schatzi:** Amen, my sister! Your hair is truly beautiful! Keep up the great work! I would love to do a follow-up with you when your hair reaches your rear-end!! 😊 So, don't forget about us. Much LOVE!

And best of luck with your clothing line. Remember readers: You can find her on Instagram at Kirby\_\_j\_\_ (two underscores on both sides of the "j"). Embrace the beauty of you.

## FOOD FOR SPIRITUAL CONTEMPLATION

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### The Pathway of Transformation: Descent

There are pathways of the mind, the ego and the spirit through which we have yet to walk. Though these pathways are paved with the chapters of our own life story; the ground is yet unfamiliar, filled with quicksand and with pitfalls named fear, pride, vanity and avarice. [When the day comes for you to traverse this new terrain, know this: YOU WILL SINK!](#) But, salvation comes when you die to self, when you erase yourself and become as lowly as the quicksand that surrounds you. [When you accept your fate as helpless, weak and pitiful in God's sight, then you may receive a reprieve and be lifted up.](#)

There are no shortcuts along this journey; [for the taskmaster who lovingly pushed you into the pit cannot be deceived.](#) S/he knows your mind, your ego and your spirit better than you do. [So if you harbor an inkling of pride, believe yourself intelligent or wise or feel special and/or exalted, you may die in the madness of your own creation, weighted down by your own life baggage.](#) "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth." (Matthew 5:5)

## **The Early Church: From Top to Bottom**

**by Fr. Richard Rohr (Center for Action and Contemplation)**

**Thursday, April 28, 2015**

The last great formal persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire ended in AD 303. Ten years later, Christianity was legalized by Constantine I. After this structural change, Christianity increasingly accepted, and even defended, the dominant social order, especially concerning war and money. Morality became individualized and largely sexual. The Church slowly lost its free and alternative vantage point. Texts written in the hundred years preceding 313 show it was unthinkable that a Christian would fight in the army, as the army was killing Christians. By the year 400, the entire army had become Christian, and they were now killing the pagans.

Before AD 313, the Church was on the bottom of society, which is *the privileged vantage point for understanding the liberating power of Gospel for both the individual and for society*. Overnight the Church moved from the bottom to the top, literally from the catacombs to the basilicas. The Roman basilicas were large buildings for court and other public assembly, and they became Christian worship spaces.

The Christian church became the established religion of the empire and started reading the Gospel from the position of maintaining power and social order instead of experiencing *the profound power of powerlessness that Jesus revealed*. In a sense, Christianity almost became a different religion! This shift would be similar to reversing the first of the 12 Steps to *seek power* instead of admitting powerlessness. In this paradigm only the "winners" win, whereas the true Gospel has everyone winning. Calling this power "spiritual" and framing success as moral perfection made this position all the more seductive to the ego and all the more disguised.

The failing Roman Empire needed an emperor, and Jesus was used to fill the power gap, making much of his teaching literally incomprehensible and unhearable, even by good people. The relationships of the Trinity were largely lost as the very shape of God: the Father became angry and distant, Jesus became the needed organizing principle, and for all practical and dynamic purposes the Holy Spirit was forgotten. An imperial system needs law and order and clear belonging systems more than it wants mercy or meekness or transformation.

By the grace of God, saints and holy ones of every century and in every denomination and monastery still got the point, but only if they were willing to go through painful descent--which Catholics call "the way of the cross," Jesus called "the sign of Jonah," Augustine called "the paschal mystery," and the Apostles' Creed called "the descent into hell." Without these journeys there's something essential you simply don't understand about the very nature of God and the nature of your own soul. You try to read reality from the side of power instead of powerlessness, despite the fact that God has told us (through the image of the Crucified) that vulnerability and powerlessness is the way to true spiritual

power. But Christians made a jeweled logo and decoration out of the cross, when it was supposed to be a shocking strategic plan, charting the inevitable path of full transformation into God.

## ABOUT US

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As the first natural hair salon in Raleigh, NC, *Schatzi's* is a *one-stop shop* for all of your natural hair care needs. With a warm and nurturing ambiance for clients to “Embrace the Beauty of You,” *Schatzi's* is located in the Park on Millbrook Condominium complex, near the intersection of Six Forks and Millbrook Rds.

*Schatzi's* design gallery provides services that nurture natural hair with talented Board licensed stylists who are happy to guide you through and beyond the transition process. Our two-floor art gallery is provided courtesy of local artist Jasmine Hawthorne.